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ABSTRACT

The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment for grades 4 and 6 (optional for grade 8) is conducted each school year, with a call for each student's best piece in March. This Teacher's Guide provides instructions for implementing the portfolio program throughout the year, in order to ensure standardized application of the process. The portfolio program was first used in 1991-92 as an outgrowth of educational reform efforts in the state. Procedures are summarized for sixth-grade teachers, beginning with a list of materials needed and moving through the scoring process. Scoring guides are included for narrative, expository, descriptive, and analytic writing. Each guide is illustrated with samples of student work at proficiency levels 1 through 6. An addendum contains the required prompts (topics for student writing) for the 1992-93 school year. (Contains 24 references.) (SLD)

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New Mexico
Portfolio Writing Assessment

Teacher's Guide
Grade 6

New Mexico State Department of Education
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Please Read This Entire Guide Carefully

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1992-1993 NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

GRADE 6 -- REQUIRED PROMPTS

PROMPT 1 NARRATIVE

Pretend that you are sitting in your classroom and, suddenly, you hear strange noises behind the chalkboard. When you walk up to it to see what is causing the noises, the chalkboard opens up and you see a long tunnel. Write a story about what happens after you go into the tunnel.

PROMPT 2 EXPOSITORY

Think of someone you admire. This person might be someone you know, someone from a story you've read, or someone you've seen on television or in the movies. Choose the one person that you admire the most. Write an essay for your teacher explaining why you admire this person. Be sure to include supporting details.

PROMPT 3 DESCRIPTIVE

Think of your favorite place. Write to a friend and describe your favorite place. Choose only one place. Be sure to give enough details so that your friend will know what the place looks like and how it makes you feel to be there.

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New Mexico
Portfolio Writing Assessment

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THE NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment, grades four and six (optional for grade eight), is conducted each school year, with a call for "best piece" in March. The prompt addressing the type of writing to be assessed at each grade level will be announced when a call for papers is issued. All students in grades four and six will participate. Unless otherwise noted in their IEPs, all Special Education students in grades four and six will participate. Students who have been assessed as Limited English Proficient are exempt from submitting a piece for scoring in the spring.

INTRODUCTION

This Teachers Guide provides instructions regarding procedures to be followed throughout the school year. In order to ensure standardization, each teacher who is charged with the responsibility of conducting the assessment should adhere to the guidelines presented herein. The process and the assessment should be conducted in a classroom setting; students should not take the work home.

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE GUIDE CAREFULLY BEFORE WORKING WITH THE PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT MATERIALS. You should become familiar with the directions provided in this guide. Your comfort with the assessment situation will reduce student anxiety and enable smooth administration. If at any time you need assistance, materials, or information, contact your District Test Coordinator.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Education Reform Act of 1986 moved the State into the assessment of student writing. Until 1991-92, New Mexico schools were utilizing the Direct Writing Assessment in grades four and six. Interest in portfolio assessment and a national trend toward assessments that are also instructional led the Statewide Student Assessment Task Force to consider using portfolios to assess student writing. Thus, several consultants in the State Department of Education researched portfolio assessments and agreed with the task force that assessments could be provided that can be described as the performance of learning. With assistance and consultation from many entities, the Portfolio Writing Assessment was utilized in classrooms for the first time in 1991-92.

In addition, it was decided to offer this assessment as an option to grade eight students for those districts who wish to participate. This allows for more practice and development as well as an additional checkpoint before the New Mexico High School Competency Examination written composition is administered in grade ten.

Research has demonstrated that students who use portfolios develop more competent writing skills than students who do not use portfolios. Each student's portfolio becomes a record of achievements over time. The student uses higher level thinking skills of synthesis and evaluation as decisions are made regarding what pieces to save as the year progresses. Using the portfolio process, learning takes place in a more natural way as the student is encouraged to reflect on his/her work while making responsible choices regarding work to be saved.

MATERIALS LIST FOR PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

Each teacher who has the responsibility for conducting the Portfolio Writing Assessment will be provided with the following materials:

1. **Teachers Guide**
   This guide contains information on the process and the assessment and annotated range finder papers for the types of discourse required of the grade level being assessed. Also, within the guide are the rubrics for scoring the students' writing both holistically and analytically. A bibliography is also provided for the teacher's use.

2. **A portfolio envelope**, one per student
   This envelope is intended as a special storage space for the student's writing. It is printed with a writing checklist and a description of the four different discourses applied in grades four through eight. This checklist and the descriptions are reproduced for your use on page 8 of this guide.

3. **A final composition booklet** for each student
   The final draft of "best piece" for the prompt identified by the State Department in the spring to be submitted for scoring will be transcribed onto this booklet. The booklets will be sent to your district when a call for papers is issued in March. Each booklet will contain the required prompt which will be one of the prompts your students have been working on throughout the year. There will be a biographical data page and four lined pages for the student's composition. The student's writing for the required prompt should be limited to four pages. If additional pages are used, the cost of scoring will be higher. A request to add more pages or to submit a computer generated response must first go through your district's office and then be forwarded to the State Department. The State Department will review the request and determine whether or not to grant it.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN DISTRIBUTING PORTFOLIOS TO STUDENTS

1. Provide each student with a portfolio.
2. Have each student write his/her name in the designated space.
3. Discuss how artists use portfolios to demonstrate good work.
4. Explain the use of this portfolio.
5. Review the writing process which will be used with this portfolio.
6. Review the writing checklist printed on the student's portfolio and how it can be used most effectively during this process. (A copy of this checklist is printed on page 6 of this guide.)
7. Explain what holistic scoring means. (Review the rubrics provided in this guide, pages 8, 50, and 76.)
8. Explain what analytic scores mean. (Review the rubric provided in this guide, page 112.)
9. Discuss the types of discourse to be addressed at the grade level you are teaching (see page 6--grades four and six: expository, narrative, and descriptive; grade eight: expository, narrative and persuasive).
10. As you work throughout the year, use the practice prompts first, the ones for which range finder papers are provided within this guide. You may want to review the section on page 4 entitled ***Student as Performer/Teacher as Coach***.
11. When you and the students are comfortable with this process, you will want to move on to the required prompts, one of which will be announced in March for transcribing student work onto the final composition booklet.
12. Additional portfolios may be obtained from your test coordinator.

13. Depending upon the time of arrival of a new student, he/she may not have time to complete all required prompts. When the prompt for which a best piece must be transcribed is announced in March, the teacher may feel the new student did not have sufficient time for completion; therefore, that student paper might not be submitted for scoring. The teacher will desire a score for each student if at all possible. The State Department should be contacted for further clarification.

WORKING WITH THE PRACTICE PROMPTS--RANGE FINDER PAPERS PROVIDED

The bulk of this guide contains three practice prompts, one for each of the discourses to be addressed at your grade level. For each practice prompt, holistic rubrics are provided along with papers which have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all of the six holistic score points possible. In addition, the analytic rubric is provided along with papers that have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all three score points for each of the four analytic categories.

1. During writing instruction time introduce practice prompts and have students write toward those topics.
2. Share range finder papers at this time.
3. Share scoring rubrics at this time by giving each student a copy.
4. Review why each paper was given a particular score.
5. Students can use the rubric to understand how to improve their piece of writing.
6. Students may work in groups to share similar concerns.
7. The writing process of revising should be used at this time.
8. Small or large group writing lessons can be incorporated as defined by certain needs derived from class papers and discussion.
9. Use these prompts for practice in understanding the process as much as you feel necessary.
10. Students should feel successful with these prompts before they work with the required prompts.
11. The timeline for this process should be decided by you and your students.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN WORKING WITH THE REQUIRED PROMPTS

1. The required prompts will be provided to you each year. If you have not received the prompts designated for the current school year, call your test coordinator to obtain a copy.
2. These prompts address the different discourses required at your grade level.
3. Your students are required to write at least one paper for each of the required prompts and should be encouraged to write as many papers as necessary to produce a good piece.
4. Drafts of these prompts should be stored in the students' portfolios.
5. In March a call for "best piece" will be issued for only one of these required prompts.
6. The student and teacher should conference about which piece demonstrates the student's best effort in the called for discourse.
7. The student will then transcribe the "best piece" for the requested prompt into the final composition booklet.
8. The final composition booklet will have four lined pages for this purpose and will be provided when the call for "best piece" is announced.
9. The student should limit his/her writing to no more than four pages.
10. Your test coordinator will disseminate directions for transcribing along with the booklets in March.

As the teacher introduces each of the required prompts, it is suggested that lessons about the particular discourse, planning, revising, proofreading and editing be delivered throughout this period of time. The work with the required prompts should be the student's own writing and should be performed in the classroom.

As the student works with the prompts, he/she may use references such as the dictionary or thesaurus. The teacher's role in this process should be one of "coach." Sound instructional practices are the order of the day in this process. The teacher should be a coach and resource for the student throughout this process.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The purpose of writing is to convert a student's thoughts into a coherent written message understandable by others. The writing process is broken down into four manageable steps to help assure a student's success.

STEP I: PRE-WRITING is any experience, activity, or exercise that motivates a student to write.

STEP II: DRAFTING is the process of synthesizing language experiences, notes, thoughts, and ideas that occur during the pre-writing phase and developing an organized piece of writing.

STEP III: REVISING/EDITING includes all phases of correction and change improvement after collaboration with others on content. Rethinking, reorganizing, and revising ideas, as needed, ready the writing for sharing and/or publication.

STEP IV: PUBLISHING is the culmination of the writing process when the final copy is shared with the audience. The decision as to whether the writing will be displayed, reproduced, or given orally or physically to someone, involves both the author and the teacher.

STUDENT AS PERFORMER/TEACHER AS COACH

Within the student as performer/teacher as coach model, student and teacher work as a team toward mastery of a set of tasks leading toward an outcome. This outcome is then demonstrated by the student. The student must be responsible for an agreed-upon task. After completion of that task, the student demonstrates self-regulation, self-discipline and self-initiative in order to complete a written discourse to the satisfaction of both self and teacher.

In his article, ***Student-As-Worker: Toward Engaging and Effective Curricula,*** Grant Wiggins talks about student-as-worker being able to answer the following questions when working on a designated piece of writing:

1. What is my task?
2. What is its purpose?
3. What do I need to do next?
4. What resources are available?
5. What know-how and knowledge are required to do it well?
6. How will my work be judged?
7. How will I know when my work is adequate?
8. How should I allot my time?
9. What is my goal in this work?
10. Where is my performance strongest and weakest?
11. What can I do to improve?

The student and teacher work through these questions as the written piece unfolds; the teacher acting as prodding coach, and the student as worker. The final completion of the designated piece rests with the student's feeling that he/she has completed a piece of discourse to his/her satisfaction.

WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

A rubric is a set of criteria from which one can take direction. The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment rubric is a six point scale using the following discourses: expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive. Each student should progress through this rubric as his/her writing improves. The assessment becomes an instructional and learning tool with the scoring rubrics applied to the student's writing throughout the process.

WHAT IS HOLISTIC SCORING?

A holistic score is an overall picture of how the student is able to convey meaning in his/her writing. Does the writing have a beginning, middle and end? Does the writing flow to the designated prompt? Is the author involved in the writing? With a broad stroke has the author conveyed meaning?

USING THE PORTFOLIO BEYOND THIS SCHOOL YEAR

In the spring of each school year, the holistic and analytic scores will be returned to the school districts. These scores should become a part of the student's permanent record. Labels are issued to adhere to the student's transcript. There will also be a copy of the report that can be shared with the student and parents.

The "best piece" for each of the required prompts should remain in the student's portfolio, along with any other materials that the student and teacher have agreed upon. The portfolio and its contents are to be passed on to the student's teacher in the fall of the next school year. Each school and district should develop a plan to ensure that this is possible. The "off grade" teachers (i.e., grades five, seven, and nine) may work with the contents of the student's portfolio and issue additional writing assignments which may be kept and passed along with the student from year to year. A process for "weeding out" materials can also be established at the district level. By the time a fourth grade student reaches tenth grade, the high school teacher will have a portfolio of work which portrays strengths, weaknesses, successes, progress and a writer's "voice." These portfolios can be used to assist in the preparation for the tenth grade High School Competency Examination written composition.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

When score reports are returned to the districts, each student will receive a holistic score from a range of 1 through 6 and analytic scores from a range of 1 through 3. If a student's paper is not scorable, a reason will be given. Possible reasons for not scoring a paper include: blank paper, off topic, illegible, written in a language other than English, and insufficient response. The scores should be compared to the rubrics published in this guide in order to determine a student's strengths and weaknesses and to provide suggestions for improvement.

The individual school reports should help staff make decisions about the school's writing program. District results should inform the curriculum revision process in writing and, perhaps, in language arts.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

The Language Arts Specialist at the State Department of Education has developed a supplemental packet of material which teachers may find helpful as they work with the portfolio writing process. You may request a packet from your district test coordinator. This supplemental packet contains ideas for planning, organizing, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing. Ideas for encouraging writing across the curriculum are included in this material. You may reproduce this packet of materials for other teachers in your building. There are ideas that may prove helpful to teachers at any grade level. You are not required to use the supplemental material.

DESCRIPTION OF EACH MODE OF DISCOURSE

Expository--This piece of writing demonstrates the student's ability to explain something in detail, such as "how to" do something, or to explain a position taken based on reasons.

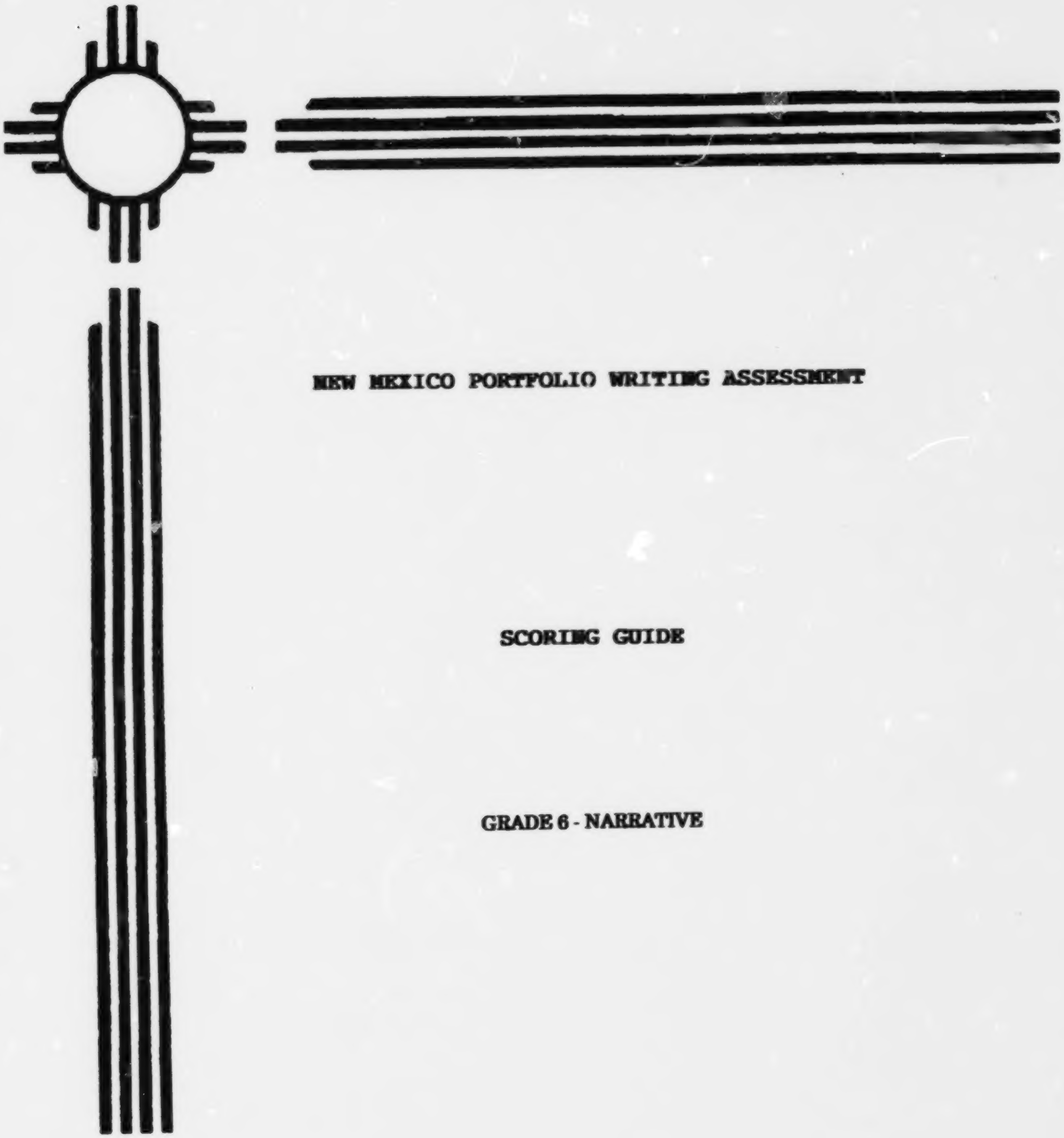
Narrative--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of a story plot and can develop characters in a meaningful way.

Descriptive--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of location, size, color and style, and can include sensory images in description.

Persuasive--This piece of writing has a strong opening statement, followed by opinionative argument appealing to one's emotions, and a strong conclusion derived from the opening statement.

STUDENT WRITING CHECKLIST

1. I have used a plan for my composition.
2. I have written a rough draft of my composition.
3. I have written this composition to be read by:______________.
4. I have written a good topic sentence for each paragraph that I wrote.
5. I have written ideas and details about the topic sentence.
6. I have written a clear ending for my composition.
7. I have written complete sentences.
8. I have used correct grammar.
9. I have used correct capitalization and punctuation.
10. I have checked my spelling.
11. I have used good handwriting.
12. I have used this checklist to revise my rough draft.
13. I have written and proofread my final draft.



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 6 - NARRATIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - NARRATIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	COMMAND OF NARRATION	UNDERSTANDING OF NARRATION	SOME SENSE OF NARRATION	LITTLE OR NO EVIDENCE OF NARRATION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
∞	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics	May display severe errors in mechanics.
			NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

This is the prompt 6th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Pretend that you wake up one night, look out your window, and see a strange, green light in your yard. You decide to go outside and see where the light is coming from. Write a story about what happens after you go outside.

1 = The response indicates little or no evidence of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

GRADE 6 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 1**

The Green Light

It all started one night when B.J. Deitz was in bed. She woke up, and saw a green light. B.J. went outside to see what it was. There was a big hole. B.J looked down the hole and saw nothing.

Score Point 1

This writer shows little evidence of understanding narration. There is a sequence of events but few details (went outside, looked down, saw nothing). A lengthier sequence of events or some elaboration is needed for a higher score.

GRADE 6 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 1**

This green glow was coming in my window I went to go see whar it was. It was some kind of UfO I gess Cause I couldn't see exacty what it was.

Wele any way I went around to go see what I Could fined. I saw this little short hary green man. He called my name. Matt come here then he took me in the ufO then I woke up.

Score Point 1

This very brief response has a few sequenced events, but the details are sparse and general (some kind of UFO I guess, see what I could find). A longer sequence and/or more specific details are necessary to receive a higher score.

I was doing my homework when I heard something. I looked out and saw something glowing It was some glowing socks I bring them in my room. Then I went to sleep I woke up and my T.V. was gone CDS and my window was broken I called the police they came and one of them was wearing green socks like the one I found. They couldn't do anything about the robbery unless we seen who they were. I went to bed but I stayed awake to see if he would come back. He did and I caught him Then my mom called the cops. The police took him to jail.

Score Point 1

This response is unsuccessful because the details are confusing and the reader must infer what the writer is attempting to convey (they couldn't do anything unless we seen who they were). The narrative is disrupted by the lack of clarity.

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2 = The response indicates some sense of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.
- may display numerous errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

Green Light

I walked outside and saw a big green light in my yard. It looked like the sun but different It was exzotic, cool, and weird I thought it was a star.

I walked up to it and put my hand out. I felt a big metal frame, it was round like a plate. It looked like a U.F.O. from Outer Space.

A big yellow door started to open. A person, or what ever it was came out of the big round plate. It started to talk a langhue. I did not know. I tried to ask it what it was saying. Butt then it started to talk my langhue. It said "I would like you to come back with to Sanman." I told it "go back were you came from or I would call the police. It took off like a shooting-star and I never saw it agin.

Score Point 2

This response presents highlights that provide an outline for a better story. The elaboration, where present, is general (exotic, cool, and weird). More elaboration or a longer sequence is needed for a higher score.

"The Green Light at Midnight"

One hot summer night in New York City I woke up at 12:00 A.M sharp. I went over to the window and looked out. I saw a green light!

I went downstairs, and went outside. I screamed very loud! It was coming from the barn, it's a little bright green alien. I screamed again! I scared it so I went over to it and said "I won't hurt."

It came over by me and we went in the house to my room upstairs.

"Oh no!" I shouted "my mother is getting up hurry get under the bed!" Then my mother walked in my room and said, "Young Lady what are you doing up so early in the morning?" I replied "What it's not that early its only 12:16 A.M." "Young lady go back to sleep now!" Mother said. "Mother" I replied. "NOW!" she said.

So I got in bed, she left, I got out of bed. I looked under my bed for the little green alien. He was gone!!! I looked every where for him. I found it in my bed asleep.

That morning when I woke up he was gone again I found him in the dog house. I woke him up. Lucky for me my parents were still asleep.

The green little alien dude ate breakfest, got in his space ship, and went home.

So I went inside to my room and looked out the window.

Went down stairs and got a glass of milk for my Mother & some jucie for my Dad.

"I wished the alien was here to scare my sister" I said

I hope I see him again.

Score Point 2

This higher level "2" response is a sustained sequence of events. The details are list-like (I got in bed, she left, I got out of bed; ate breakfast, got in his spaceship, and went home), and there is little elaboration. Although the conversation with the mother is well-written, it adds little to the storyline. Also, the events that occur after the alien goes home (milk for Mother, juice for Dad) seem unnecessary and irrelevant.

It was a hot summer night. Everyone, or thing seemed to be restless after a harddays work.

There was a sudden crash! Everyone must of heard the crash because, I saw everyone running towards the end of the road.

Some how my mind urged me to see what had happened but, at the same time another part of my mind tells me that I shouldn't go & that something bad might happen

"Well, I guess I should go see what hade happened." I thought to myself.

So I did.

When I approached the scene it turned out to be an unidentified object,

I should know, I am a scientist.

When I walked up to the space capsule I saw the strangest thing in sight. It had a beige skin color that looked like a piece of rubber, or that it looked like a wax statue.

When I first took a glance at the alien it seemed of been talking to me in a strange language, or a language that has not been heard before.

Before he had learned our language, he tried to introduce his peers, that had kept him company, to us.

They had stayed in our town for a period of time until we had finished fixing their space Capsule.

I'm still wondering how we prohibited people from seeing the aliens, or should I say our special visitors.

Before our special visitors had left, the town had threw them a party.

After the party was over, the special visitors were full, and I do mean full. they were so full that the men had help them through door so they wouldn't get stuck.

After they had left, we had cleaned up their mess they had made and left everywhere and places you don't need to know.

Well, I guess I can go finish Cleaning my house, but remember this, never feed your out of town vistitors sweets

Score Point 2

This response shows that the writer has some sense of narration. There are some nice specific details (looked like a wax statue, so full that the men had to help them through the door). The response is flawed, however, by weak transitions and confusing jumps in the time sequence (I'm still wondering how we prohibited people from seeing the aliens). A stronger organization is needed for a higher score.

3 = The response indicates an understanding of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

THE GREEN MONSTER NAMED YEHEMANGA.

One night whill I was in my bed I saw a big green light outside my window. I went outside to see what it was then I saw a space ship land in my own front yard. Then three big ugly slimmy green monsters came out. Then they said, "Hello Earthlings." I said "Who are you." Then they said, "My name is yehemanga from a planet called moonga. He said I am here to explore earth ~~cause~~ because Im a scientist.

"So will you go back to my planet with us." Then I said "I guess." We went in the space-ship and their were all kinds of buttens and lights. Then he said, "Prepare for take off." When we got to his planet moonga, alot of other green monsters bowing to me. Then he told me.

"That I was their queen." So he started bowing. I told them to take me back home, and that I didnt want to be their queen. The they carried me of and started throwing me flowers. Then I got hungry and asked for some food. The all of a sudden about 20 peaple with differt foods. Then after I told them I didn't want any more thay went and came again but now with dessert. Then they put me on pillows and started feeding me grapes.

Then I started missing my family so I

snuck away and went home on the space-ship and told my mom what happened and she started laughing. that night I saw another green light so I yelled out the window, "Let someone else be your Queen." then I closed the window and went to sleep!!

Score Point 3

This narrative has a good storyline and some specific details (they put me on pillows and started feeding me grapes). However, there are gaps in the progression (prepare for take off. When we got to his planet) and a lack of transitions between clusters of ideas. Repetition of the transitional word "then" within paragraphs interferes with readability.

My Green Friend

One night I woke up. I was still sleepy. I woke up because I thought I saw a strange light. I walked to the window and saw the green light. I looked big and shiny. Even though it was round and dark green, I wasn't sure whether or not It was real. I was the only one at my house at the time. However, I decided to go outside. I hid behind a tree. All of a Sudden, lights started blinking red and green. Even though I was still sleepy eyed and barely awake, I was beginning to think something magical was happening. The light appeared to come from outer space. All of a sudden the red light stopped blinking and the light became bright green. The flew toward me. I started to run but he chased me around my house ten times. Finally he caught me and asked me if I would be its friend. I said yes, and then we walked back to my front yard. I told it to wait outside while I went inside to see what time it was. It was Mid-night. I went outside and then we went flying around the city. When we got back it was 5:A.M. and I was really sleepy. I went inside to go to sleep while the light stayed outside. I woke up in the morning about 11:45 A.M. Later, Friday afternoon Michael and Andrew came came over and we played basketball, the teams were Michael and Andrew vs. the light and I. The light and I won 210 to 171. It got late and Michael and Andrew had to go home, so it was just My friend Light and Me. We stayed outside and played somemore basketball. It taught me how to jump higher so I could slam a basketball on a ten foot basketball goal. The next day I had a basketball game. During the game I scored 50 points and Michael scored 53 points. We won by alot of points. Two days after that game the light left and went back to outer space. School started back. A week later the light came back. On one of the Friday's after school I had a party and I invited 1,000 people and all of them came. After the party I had to cleanup. On Sunday I woke up and then some of my friends came over. That night the light left and never came back.

Score Point 3

This sustained sequence of events indicates that the writer has an understanding of narration, but it is characterized by excessive rambling with little sense of preplanning. The initial meeting with the light is elaborated, but flying around the city is unelaborated. The events after the basketball section seem "tacked on" and are also unelaborated.

ENCOUNTER OF THE NERD KIND

ONE NIGHT, NOT TOO LONG AGO, I DECIDED TO TAKE A WALK OUTSIDE. EVERYONE ELSE IN MY HOUSE WAS ASLEEP SO I WENT ALONE. I SAW A STRANGE GREEN LIGHT SO I WENT TO SEE WERE IT WAS COMING FROM. IT PULLED ME TOWARDS IT THEN I BLACKED OUT.

THE NEXT MORNING I WOKE UP IN A SMALL, DINKY CELL. I LOOKED ALL AROUND ME. THERE MUST HAVE BEEN TWENTY OTHER CREATURES AROUND ME. I SAW ONE OF THE GAURDS ON THE SHIP. THE ONLY WAY I COULD DESCRIBE IT IS LIKE BLUE JELLO.

EACH DAY I TRIED TO COUNT THE CREW. THERE MUST BE AT LEAST FIFTY MEMBERS ON BOARD. THERE IS ONE MEMBER THAT I NAMED. IT'S NAME IS BLOOB BECAUSE OF ALL THE MISTAKES HE MAKES.

I TRIED TO KEEP TRACT OF THE DAYS BY MAKING SCRACHES ON THE WALL BUT THAT DIDN'T WORK BECAUSE I COULDN'T TELL NIGHT FROM DAY

A COUPLE DAYS LATER BLOOB, I THINK, CAME UP TO ME. HE MUST HAVE MASTERED MY LANGUAGE BECAUSE HE DIDN'T USE A TRANSLATER. HIS RASPY VOICE SAID TO ME, "FORGIVE US FOR BEING SO HOSTILLE." "WHERE ARE YOU FROM," I ASKED HIM? HE REPLIED "YOU CALL I PLUTO, BUT WE CALL HARTH." I ASKED HIM "WHEN WILL I BE LET FREE?" AT THAT QUESTION HE TURNED AROUND AND LEFT.

I SAID TO MY SELF "IF HE WON'T LET ME GO FREE I'LL MAKE MY SELF FREE.

I CALLED ONE OF THE GAURDS AND GRABED HIS LASERBLADE AND CUT THROUGH THE BARS. I RAN INTO THE DOCKING BAY AND STOLE A LITTLE SHIP.

I PRESSED ALL THE BUTTONS AND TOOK OFF TO THE EARTH.

EVERYTHING WAS GREAT WHEN I CAME BACK EXCEPT I HAD TON'S OF HOMEWORK.

Score Point 3

The writer of this response demonstrates an understanding of narration. Although there are some good details (the conversation with Bloob), there is also some lack of clarity (the only way I could describe it is like blue jello). The events of the escape happen very quickly and without elaboration.

4 = The response indicates a command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

The Unusual Green Light

One early morning about 6:00, I woke up and put on my clothes. I happen to glance out the window and see this green ray of light shining down in our back yard. I decided to go in the back yerd and see what it was. At first, I thought it was just my imagination, but when I got to the back door I could see the green light through the window.

As, I stepped out the back door I could hear this noise coming from the sky. When, I looked up I saw this flying sawser that was shaped like an egg and had four yellow lights: two at the top, two at the bottom, and a great big green light in the middle of the flying sawser, that was shining down on our back yard. I noticed that my dog, Barney, was a sleep under the green light.

When, I was walking toward the green light I kept hearing this noise that sounded like someone who was driving their nails into a chalkboard. I went to put my hand threw the green light, but there was like glass all around it. I tried banging on it, but it wouldn't break. It didn't even make a scratch.

About that time my Mom called out the backdoor and said to come in side and eat my breakfast. I said O.K. and went inside. When, I got through eating my breakfast, I went in the backyard to see if the green light was still there. When, I got to the door I knew that the the green light and flying sawser were gone, because I couldn't hear the noise anymore. I found out that the green light was gone, but Barny was still sound a sleep.

Score Point 4

This response is a well-controlled narrative covering a very brief period of time from looking out the window, to going into the backyard, to approaching the light. Elaboration is consistent throughout the response. More development or a lengthier sequence of events is needed for a higher score.

The Friendly Aliens

One night, Friday, October 31st around 12:12 A.M. a strange greenlight appeared in my backyard. I decided to check it out. I went to my backporch and saw a light in the sky I couldn't see it to well because it was raining so I went back inside. I watched the light from the window in my room. The light was getting closer. I decided to tell my mom and dad. We all went outside and here's were my story begins.

The light got closer and closer by the minute. It stopped raining and turned clearer. The light started looking more and more like a flying saucer. Then it landed in the back alley We opened the gate to see what was there. The flying saucer was about 15 feet tall and 20 feet round. A door opened and a bright red light shone through. A creature came out. It was about 4 feet tall I think he was more scared than I was. We both walked toward each other. For some strange reason he spoke English. We along with each other.

Three more aliens walked out of the flying saucer. They were all about the same sizes. They didn't look to scared.

We asked them inside the house. When they came in the seemed shocked. They said their house's were in the sky.

I asked them why they came here to Earth. They said they were here to study our planet. They were only going to be here a day.

The smallest alien came up to me and gave me a present. He said it was candy and asked me to eat it. It tasted like M+M's. They tasted pretty good. Then I gave him a Snickers bar. He ate it and said he didn't like it.

The biggest alien said the had to go. The promised they would visit us again sometime later. Before they left I asked them were they lived? The second biggest said they livid on the planet Bongoid. He also said it was in the solar system astre's.

Finally, they said good-bye. They flew away the same way they came. I said good-bye and hoped they would come back soon.

Score Point 4

This response is well-organized, progresses logically, and is evenly elaborated. However, much of the elaboration is general (they were all about the same size, they tasted pretty good). In addition, there is a monotony of sentence structure which prevents the writer from receiving a higher score.

One Sleepless Night

Shortly after I went to bed, about 10:30 p.m., I was awakened by what sounded like a small running engine. I jumped out of bed and saw a green light in my backyard. I decided to go outside and look at it. It appeared to be going round and round in a circle about 10 feet wide every minute around my big tree in my backyard. I asked myself why is it in my yard and not in somebody else's yard? I thought for a second, and then I remembered that my backyard is the only yard on the street without a dog to chase the green light and bark at the green light. All of the other dogs on the street chase and bark at light and intruders or anything else that is not supposed to be in their yard. I then thought that whoever is in charge of this weird green light must know that I don't have a dog. I deided to get even closer to the green light. I noticed that there were footprints leading from nextdoor to my house and then back. I know that my nextdoor neighbor is a prankster named Billy Bob.

I still didn't have enough evidence to accuse Billy Bob, but ever since I moved on the street he made pranks to my five brothers and two sisters. The two sisters are pains in the neck.

Well, it seems like something pulled or pushed the green light. I saw what looked like tire tracks or skids in the mud in my yard going round and round my big tree. I got my magnifying glass and studied the tire tracks and skids. They looked like remote controlled car tire tracks. I knew then that my nextdoor neighbor, Billy Bob, is in charge of the green light because he has a remote controlled car collection. I picked up the car with the green light on top of it and threw it I decided to get even, very even because he ruined my good long sleep for my basketball game tomorrow. I woke up my five brothers and two sisters. I got Billy Bob and threw him over the fence to my backyard. My brothers started punching Billy Bob, and my sisters kicked him We beat him to a pulp. He hasn't bothered me since. That is my story on One Sleepless Night

Score Point 4

The writer of this response demonstrates a command of narration. The clues leading to the discovery of the neighbor/prankster as the source of the trouble are well-controlled and elaborated. There is a minor interruption in the progression (the two sisters are pains in the neck), and the closure is very weak.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

Green Light

Late one night, I was sitting in my room watching T.V. I walked back to bed and glanced out the window. I saw a glowing green light. I decided to go outside to see what was causing the light.

I walked down the hall. I looked at the clock. It showed 1:07 A.M. I walked out the door. The light was so bright that it looked like a green sun. My eyes adjusted to the light. I could see a few than aliens. One came and grabbed me by the arm and took me back to their ship.

I walked in the ship, it seemed like there were hundreds of aliens. They had red glassy eyes, button noses, and suction cup fingers. One a table there was a hairballish chunk running around. A few aliens were chasing it.

The aliens took me to a room filled with mirrors. On one wall there was a tiny porthole. They left the room. The ship started to rumble. I ran to the porthole and looked out. We were lifting off. I could see cars and houses get smaller as we went up. They looked like doll house figures. I decided to sit in a corner and get some sleep.

I awoke in my bed. The T.V. was still on. I thought to myself, "I must have fallen asleep." I turned off my T.V. and looked out the window. I saw a green light. I thought to myself, "Don't expect me to go out there."

Score Point 5

The writer of this narrative has consistently enhanced the storyline with clear, specific details (1:07 A.M., red glassy eyes, button noses, suction cup fingers, the ship started to rumble, They looked like doll house figures). A more sustained sequence or more development is needed for a higher score.

Greenlight Crooks and Backyard Sixth-Graders

It was a warm, clear night that Friday night. Everyone was in bed and going to sleep. Like all the others I fell asleep, but not for long. At about 11:20 p.m. I woke up. I heard strange noises coming from outside. I got out of bed and looked out my window. There I saw a strange, green light. It scared me, but I still decided to check it out.

I went downstairs and to the back door. I looked outside, but the light was gone. On my way back to the stairs I bumped my leg on the kitchen table.

"Oooh. That smarts," I whispered to myself.

I went back upstairs, climbed into bed, and fell asleep.

"Honey! Time to get up," my mom called.

"Ok I'm up," I said trying to go back to sleep.

Then I remembered what had happened last night

"I wonder if that was a dream," I said to myself.

I threw back the covers and found there was a bruise on my leg.

"I'll tell Sarah about this but no one else," I said as I got dressed and went downstairs to eat.

After I ate I went to Sarah's house.

"You'll never guess what happened to me last night." I said looking around suspiciously.

"What happened?" Sarah asked.

I told. Sarah what had happened.

"Wow! Do you think the light will come back tonight?" she whispered with a tone of excitement in her voice.

"I don't know. Want to see if you can stay the night? If you can, we can stay up and watch for the green light," I replied.

"We can even make a trap!" Sarah yelled.

"Sssh. It's supposed to be a secret."

"Ya. Whatever. Come on, let's see if I can stay the night," Sarah said as she went inside to ask her mom.

Sarah's mom said she could stay the night, so we got her things, and went to my house.

"I'm glad my mom is letting us sleep outside tonight," I said as I unrolled my sleeping-bag.

"Now," Sarah began, "let's set the trap."

After dinner Sarah and I went outside to our stations. Sarah's station was behind a set of bushes and mine was up in the tree.

"Sarah get ready," I whispered, "I can see the green light coming."

When the green light came in the yard we saw it was nothing but a lantern. It was who was with it that was so interesting.

"Sam," a fat, short man said, "we've got to dig up the treasure tonight."

"Ok Joe," a taller, skinny man replied.

I signaled to Sarah. She pulled a rope that tripped the trespassers. I through down a net that hooked into the ground.

The police arrived shortly after and told Sarah and me that we had caught the most wanted criminals.

The next day Sarah and I went to dig up the treasure. We dug and dug and dug. Then all of a sudden we heard a, CLUNK!

"We got it!" Sarah yelled jumping into the hole.

Soon afterward we had an old box up out of the hole. We opened it and were shocked with amazement.

"Pearls!" Sarah yelled.

"Gold!" I yelled.

"Were rich!" we cried in unision.

That's how two sixth-graders caught two criminals and became very, very wealthy.

Score Point 5

This well-sustained narrative is unified and complete. The writer has successfully used dialogue to move the storyline along. Although the response is organized and progresses logically, some of the ideas are undeveloped (let's set the trap) or general (I heard strange noises). More elaboration and more specificity are needed for a higher score.

As I quickly slipped on my coat, I silently crept out the door in a most quiet manner. My heart was pounding so fast and hard I thought it was going to jump out of my chest! I speedily crawled behind the bushes, moving slowly, but steadily towards the strange, green light.

The green light was shining so brightly, it highlighted the wind, so clearly you could see it, as it blew through the green light rays. I stood up to get a better look at the green light, and suddenly, I was sucked in!

It happened so rapidly I didn't remember anything, just that I was flying through the tunnel at the speed of light!

When I woke up, I was lying on the wet soil, with nothing around me but drenched trees and bushes. Rain was coming down in sheets, and I didn't have the slightest idea where I was, except that I wasn't in the desert! I started to trudge north through the pouring rain and over the soaked earth. After about three hours of walking, I came upon a little log cabin.

I stepped up on the porch and knocked. To my surprise, a middle aged man opened the door and invited me inside. As I walked in, a young woman gave me a cup of steaming hot chocolate. I asked the man where I was, and he told me I was in Laramie, Wyoming, the year 1881. He said that his name was Joe, and he raised horses, pigs, cattle, and even farmed some too. I told him I came from New Mexico, the year 1992. Joe said I could stay with him for a while since I didn't have anywhere to go. He gave me a soft, warm bed to sleep in, and told me to be up and dressed by sun up!

When I woke up, I got dressed and walked into the kitchen. The young woman, Laura, served me a delicious breakfast of bacon, eggs, and ham. After we finished eating, Joe and I went outside and fed the pigs and horses. He said I needed to work hard if I was going to stay with them. Joe made me build a fence, round up the cattle, brand them, put them back out in the pasture, feed the horses, then go get a deer for dinner. It was definately a hard days work, but the deer venison was so good, I figured it was worth it.

After I had been working on the ranch for about a month, and gotten accustomed to the hard work, I started to wonder if I was going to be there the rest of my life. That particular day, I had worked harder than any other day I had been there, and I really needed my rest. I was so tired, I went to sleep in about five minutes!

In the middle of the night, something strange woke me up. I looked out my window, and I couldn't believe my eyes! It was the green tunnel, out there by the barn. Now I had to make a decision. Should I stay here on the ranch with my friends, or go home? I thought about it for a minute or two, and as much as I wanted to stay, I felt like the right thing to do would be to go home to my loved ones. I walked outside towards the tunnel, and again I was sucked in. It happened just as rapidly as it had before.

When I fell out of the tunnel, I landed on my hands and knees in my backyard. My parents were never going to believe what had happened!

Score Point 5

The writer of this response shows a generally strong command of narration. The story starts out strongly with vivid imagery and a feeling of suspense. As the storyline progresses, it becomes somewhat less compelling. There is good elaboration about hard work on the ranch, but little about the friendship with Joe and Laura, so that the reader is unsure why the decision to stay or go home is a difficult one.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

One night I was watching Arsenio Hall. I heard a loud thunderous sound in my front yard. I guess I was the only one who heard it because no one else seemed to wake up.

I ran through the house to my front door. Outside I found a huge meteorite. It had a bright green strobing appearance. The green flucuating brightness slightly dazzled me.

I tried to touch it, but it seared the ends of my finger each time I tried. I ran over to the garden hose and turned it on. I hosed down the meteorite, it began to steam. It was like the meteorite was letting off pressure. The meteorite cracked. Bright green rays of light sprayed out of the crack forcing the meteorite to split open. Green slime oozed out of the opening

I picked up a stick and started poking at the ooze. It engulfed the stick and started growing larger. When it stopped growing its size had almost doubled.

I ran to an arroyo, by my house, and I watched as the slime destroyed our neighborhood. It consumed houses, cars, and trees. Sometimes it even pulled a little of the asphalt off the streets It was amazing! The ooze went on to destroying the town.

I thought of what it would do to all the other towns it would come to. I set off not knowing what dangers awaited me, knowing that the next few years of my life would be deticated to destroying the ooze.

Score Point 6

The writer of this response demonstrates a strong command of narration. Vivid images are created through excellent word choice (The green fluctuating brightness slightly dazzled me, it seared the ends of my fingers, It engulfed the stick). Suspense is created as the storyteller watches from the arroyo (not knowing what dangers awaited). The paper is fluent, organized, controlled, unified, and complete.

Glowing Green lights

Bang! "What", I said while jumping out of bed. "Sounds like the racoons got in the trash again."

I walked over to the window I saw my dad about to shoot a glowing green light. There was a bright flash. It blinded mefor a few seconds. When I regained my sight I saw the green light, but I didn't see my dad. I Kept my eyes on the green light. Itslowly disintegrated into the darkness of the night. I stood stunned not moving a muscle, not eventaking a breath.

I ranto the closest, opened the door and reached into the black formy bat. I felt something cold. "Aha! Gotit." I ran down the hallway to the door. I found it open. I ran out on the front lawn, stillclutching the bat in my sweaty palms. I could feel the cold darkness surround me. The moist grass seemed to grab my bare feet. I looked all around, butnobody was insight.

I was walking back inside when I stepped on something sharp. I jumped and moved to the side to see what I had stepped on. What I saw made me shiver. I dropped the bat and bent down for a closer look. It was my fathers wedding ring I picked it up. A strong force Knoked me over. I looked up and saw a glowing greenalien. I screamed. I wanted to run, but I was frozen with fear.

Slowly, the alien started to pick at it's face. It was like it was trying to pull off a mask. I tried to look away, but I couldn't. I watched as my father peeled off the mask.

My father later calmed me down and told me that it was just a joke. "A very cruel joke." I muttered to myself.

Score Point 6

This writer successfully creates suspense throughout the response by providing vivid imagery (It slowly disintegrated into the darkness of the night, clutching the bat in my sweaty palms, I could feel the cold darkness surround me, I was frozen with fear). The reader can only agree with the storyteller's effective closing; it was a very cruel joke.

I grabbed my rifle and my coonskin cap. I unbolted the door and walked outside. I opened the piket fence and looked out as far as I could see. I saw it over two hills and on the top of the third. I went to the stable and saddled my steed. I rode out toward the light.

When I came over the last hill I saw a round metal machine with green fire inside a glass shere. It was going out than coming back on, than going out again (it was blinking). I saw a hole in the side of it. A man with grey hair and glasses was on the floor and was bleeding from his chest. He opened his eyes and said, "Sir, take this time-machine to the date June 26, 2272, I'm dieing and my son will inherit the machine from me. I was shot and I need your help!," Then he fell over dead.

I couldn't save him but I tried to grant his last request. I saw a dial with numbers on it, I pushed the numbers 2-2-7-2-2-6, and the letters J-U-N-E. I saw a green button and pushed it. I started spinning around and around in circles and then, Wham! I was on a moving trail made of metal. I got out and I saw flying things and things that hoovered 2 feet above the ground, and I even saw things that went faster than a coon chased by a hound (and boy thats pretty darn fast). I saw a man wearing a funny looking suit with buttons on it. The man saw me and screamed. He ran over to me and said, "Who are you and what are you doing with my fathers time machine." Then he gasped cause he saw the man on the floor He knelt down on the floor and started sobbing. When he lifted his head he was in a rage, and he screamed at me "What time are you from, murderer!" I told him June 4, 1807. He punched the numbers on the dial and we started spinning then, Wham!

I was on the same hill. He grabbed my gun and hat and threw them out the door. Then before I could react he shoved me out the door and I saw it disappear. When I was layin the grass I saw something shining in the grass, glowing. It was some sort of wristband. As I was walking to the cabin I wished I had an apple pie. No sooner had I said that a apple pie appeared in my hands. "Satisfactory master" was the sound from the watch. I smiled and said "I'm gonna have fun with this," as I ate a hot piece of apple pie.

Score Point 6

This well-sustained narrative is well-developed, organized, and complete. The sequence is richly elaborated with vivid details (faster than a coon chased by a hound, when he lifted his head he was in a rage). The varied sentence structure adds fluency, which also contributes to the success of the response.

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 6 - EXPOSITORY

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - EXPOSITORY SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	LIMITED COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF EXPOSITION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics	May display severe errors in mechanics.
			NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is the prompt 6th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Your teacher has asked you to pick one place you would like to go on a field trip. Think about where you would like to go. Tell where the place is and explain why you want to go there.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

If I could choose a place to go on a field trip I would pick the skating ring. To get there take a left turn on 14th Street then another left turn on Elm Street. After that you walk two blocks down Elm Street and then you are final there. Inside the skating ring there is a snack bar, pool table, candy machines, video games, and a skating ring. At the skating ring they also play music.

If you bring money you can buy something to eat at the snack bar. In the snack bar they sale candy, pizzas, and sodas.

This concludes my story on a field trip to the skating ring.

Score Point 1

This response exhibits an inadequate command of expository writing. A subject is given (skating rink) but instead of explaining why this is a good place for a field trip, the writer gives directions to the rink and then presents a list of things found there. These details do not contribute to the expository task.

The Trip to Mars

I get out of bed to go check it out. Then I don't see anything at fist then I see this little green guy jump off the roof. At first I was scared. Then he grabed me by the arm and pulled me into the spacecraft. The next thing I knew I was at Mars.

Then I saw a whole bunch of them. There must of have been a billion of them. The little men were so busy running around working on the spacecraft they didn't even notice me watching them. They were gathering up rocks and other thing and loading them on thier spacecraft. I couldn't figure out why they wanted all those rocks. Afte they got them all loaded up they started getting ready to leave to go back to earth. It was exciting to get to fly that night in space to see all the stars of the univers. Even though it was exciting to go to Mars. I was really glad to be back home agian.

Score Point 1

This writer does not respond to the task required by the prompt. A subject is named (Mars), but the few details in this narrative response that might explain why Mars would be a good place for a field trip are incidental and insufficient to merit a higher score (it was exciting to get to fly that night in space to see all the stars).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This story is about where I would want to go on our next field trip, and why this place. Please read more to find out about the place I want to go and why.

Today our teacher told us to write a summary of where we would like to go on our field trip and why. So I took a piece of paper and wrote about the zoo as our next field trip.

I said I wanted to go to the zoo because I wanted to see different kinds of animals. Also to know where they used to live and what there names are.

This is what I wrote about in my pretend summary. I hope you can understand why I would like to go to the zoo. Its to see the animals and learn about them.

Score Point 1

Although this writer makes a minimal attempt to respond to the prompt by giving a subject (zoo) and maintaining a single focus, the few details given are vague and general (to see different kinds of animals, know where they used to live and what their names are). Introductory and concluding paragraphs make up the bulk of the response and do not contribute to the expository task.

2 = The response indicates a limited command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.
- may display numerous errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

If I could choose where to go on a field trip, I would select to departure to McDonalds.

You can there from the school by walking over the brightly colored yellow lines. When you approach the crosswalk wait for the traffic person to hold the stop sign up before the cars. Then cross over the cross walk. When you reach the other side turn left. Keep going straight within a few minutes you'll see McDonalds on your right.

Now that you are at McDonalds here are some reasons why I would like to go to McDonalds than any other place. One they make excellently cooked, mouth watering hamburgers and the thin long, golden tanned french fries. Then there's the cool refreshing soft drinks. My favorite soft drink is Sprite. The solar windows make an illuseion of being outside, peaceful and quiet.

If I could go to McDonalds here is how to get there and why I would like to go there.

Score Point 2

This response gives a subject (McDonalds), but the second paragraph is simply a description of how to get there. The few details provided in the third paragraph (hamburgers, softdrinks, solar windows) are not sufficient to demonstrate more than a limited command of expository writing.

If i could pick our field trip i would pick the skating Ring, because there is fun things to do. Like games such as pool. Then there is another reason i would like to go because me and my friends could skate together. We skate as we listen to music. Later on we could go to the snack bar to eat something.

Finally the girls would probaly hang around as we play pool. Then the girls would ask us if we want to cuple skate with them. The teachers would probaly be laughing at us. When skating is over we could go back to school.

Score Point 2

This response has a single focus (skating ring) and is organized and controlled. Although a little elaboration is provided, it serves only to clarify a general idea (fun things to do like games such as pool). More specific elaboration is needed for a higher score.

ENMU

My class is taking a fiedtrip in April. We will vote on where we want to go. I will vote on going to Eastern New Mexico University. It is a college in Portales, New Mexico. We will go on a bus. Some people say it's made up of five bluidings. The travel is 20 minutes long to get there.

The reason why is I want to learn what's expected if I go there when I'm older. I want to go there to meet diffrent educated people, and see wonderful History and Scienece musuns. Also see things we have never see before. Learn new informtion about diffrent things even bugs. We may go a radio station to see what they do there. That's why I would like to go to Eastern New Mexico University.

Score Point 2

This response has a single focus and is organized. The information in the first paragraph is mostly descriptive, and the second paragraph consists of a mixture of general ideas (learn what's expected, see things we have never seen before) and specific details (History and Science museums). More specific and elaborated details are needed for a higher score.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

Skating Rink

If I could choose a field trip for our class, I would pick the Skating Rink. I would choose it because there is not only skating but video games and pool. There is also a consession stand that sales things such as cokes, nachos, sour straws, popcorn, and chili dogs. One big thing I don't like is chewing gum. I think it is not a good rule. We could play games such as Limbo, Simon Says, and my personal favorite Red light Green light.

Skating is good exercise and relieves stress. It is goodclean~~and~~ fun. Friends can enjoy one another instead of doing Drugs or belong to gangs. It builds strong muscles and agility. I like the Skating Rink because it is fun, healthy, making muscles, and agility

Score Point 3

This response consists of several clear, specific details with a little elaboration which consists mainly of lists (sells things such as cokes, nachos, sour straws; plays games such as Limbo, Simon Says). Overall, the elaboration is sparse. Although the response is generally organized and controlled, the progression is interrupted by the comments about chewing gum, which are included for no clear reason.

The one place that I would wan't to go is to the Alanta Braves tranning camp. The Alanta Braves are a Major League baseball team I love baseball thats why I want to go there. It's located Florida. I would also want to go to learn more about baseball from the Pros. I would love to get to meet David Justice probaly the best baseball player for the Atlanta Braves. And maybe I could get a autograph from one of the beter players like, David Justice, Ron Gant, Terry Pendelton, or Greg Olson. Because the would be worth alot of money if you get the right one. So thats why I would like to go to the Alanta Braves Training Camp.

Score Point 3

This response maintains a single focus (Atlanta Braves training camp) and has several clear, specific details with some elaboration (David Justice, getting autographs). Overall, the response remains too sparse to indicate that the writer has more than a partial command of expository writing.

If I could pick a field trip I would pick the Skating Rink because it is fun and there are many things besides skating such as video games and a pool table to use. Besides it gives us a chance to do besides school and work. It is fun to go skating with your class because you will be with your friends. Besides if the weather is nice and since Rink is only a couple of blocks away it might be fun to walk.

I would like to go there because we get to listen to loud music and talk as much as we want. Most of our class think skating is fun or enjoy playing video games. In addition you get many hours for one low cost. So that concludes why I want to go skating.

Score Point 3

This response maintains a single focus (skating rink) and is controlled and organized with smooth transitions between ideas. A little elaboration is provided on several ideas (things besides skating, fun to walk) and most of the other details are clear and specific. Overall, however, the response remains sparse.

4 = The response indicates a command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.
- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.
- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.
- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

The Hospital

A place that I would like to go on a field trip is to a Hospital. There are many places to see in a hospital. You could see the pharmacy, the nursery, the phisical therapy room, the operating room, the x-ray room, and the emergency room.

There are also many people to to talk to you about these interesting rooms.

You could talk to doctors, nurses, technicians, pharmasists, receptionists, and business people. These people could tell you what they do and what a lot of the equipment is used for in the hospital. You could see equipment such as a cat scan, an x ray machine, lasers, and microscopes.

I think a hospital would be an exciting and educational place to visit.

Score Point 4

This organized, controlled response consists of two elaborated ideas (places and people) that explain why a hospital is a good place for a field trip. While the elaboration on places is simply a specific list, people is developed with specific detail and clear connections between ideas. There is an excellent transition between the two main ideas (there are also many people to talk to you about these interesting rooms), and the conclusion effectively ties all the ideas together as exciting and educational.

Carlsbad

I think it would be fun to take a field trip to Carlsbad. I would go to the Space Center in Alamogordo and camp at President's Park. I also would like to go to the Carlsbad Caverns.

It would be fun to go see the Space Center. The Dynamax theater is showing the Grand Canyon. Its going to be neat to look at all the space crafts.

I would like to camp out at President's Park It has grass so when you lie down in your tent it's not hard and bumpy.

The last thing I want to see while I'm in Carlsbad is the caverns. I would like to explore the cold and damp caves.

I think Carlsbad would be a fun field trip we would go to the Space Center in Alamogordo and see Carlsbad Caverns.

Score Point 4

This well-organized, controlled response consists of loosely connected clusters of ideas. While each of the writer's three main ideas (Space Center, President's Park, Carlsbad Caverns) has some elaboration (Dynamax Theater, It has grass, cold and damp caves), more development is necessary for a higher score.

I would like to go an a field trip to the zoo because I like the polar bears. They are funny and active. I like the colorful birds, like the painted bunting. I also like the food stands.

When I see the polar bears they're always swimming, or playing with a beachball. One time a polar bear had a beachball and was balancing it on it's stomach, while it was floating on it's back. I think they're cute.

I love to see the birds because they're colorful. My favorite is the Painted bunting. Once two painted buntings were fighting over a feather that fell off one of them. It was funny!

I also like the food. I like the buttered popcorn, it's real buttery. Cotton candy and snow cones are also my favorite. Sometimes they give you a lot of cotton candy.

I think the zoo would be a good place to go on a field trip. Even if you've been there before. You can lots of animals such as polar bears and birds. There are also tigers, lions, snakes, and lizards too.

Score Point 4

This response consists of loosely connected clusters of ideas. The three main ideas (polar bears, birds, food) are elaborated, but details such as cute, colorful, and funny are too general to contribute to the development. Although the response is organized, a stronger conclusion and smoother transitions between ideas are needed for a higher score.

5 = **The response indicates a generally strong command of exposition.**

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

I'd like to go to the Rio Grande zoo. I'd like to go there to see the white tigers, the birds, and the new seal exhibit.

I would like to see the white tigers because they are very rare. The white tigers are new at the zoo. Their fluffy fir and their blue eyes make look so gentle. They seem gentle enough so that you could pet them.

The birds are also very beautiful. They keep some of the birds in a miniature rain forest. The bald eagles, and the condors are kept in giant cages. The bald eagles are very rare birds so I would like to go see them.

Seals are great animals to see. At the zoo they have a new exhibit, it has windows so you can see the seals swimming, then you can go back up and see them being fed.

I like the white tigers, but I realy like the rare bald eagles, and the seals swimming.

Score Point 5

Elaboration of key ideas (white tigers, birds and seals) with sufficiently varied and specific detail indicates that this writer has a generally strong command of expository writing. The response is well organized and ideas progress logically throughout. The elaboration and organizational control combine to create a sense of unity and completeness. More development and greater fluency would contribute to a higher score.

The Field Trip

I would like to go to the Museum of Natural History in Albuqurque New Mexico because of the interesting exibits the museum has. I also think that going to the museum would be informative and it would be school related.

The Museum of Natural History has many exciting things to see. They have a children's labratory, dinosaur models, and even a gift shop. I think that our class would enjoy looking at all of these interesting places.

In the children's labratory, there is all kinds of neat things. Some of the things are bee hives, ant farms, snakes, microscopes to look through, and there are boxes that you have to guess what's hidden inside them. The children's labratory is my favorite part in the whole museum.

The museum has all kinds of dinosaur exibits such as a tryannosaurus sef, a pterodactyl triceratops, and many more. I think that the most complet dinasaur is the brontosaurus.

In the gift shop, there are a lot of interesting item's. I like to look at the souvenirs that the gift shop has. They sale things like information booklets and all kinds of dinasaur shirts.

It would be a lot of fun if we could take a field trip to the Museum of Natural History.

Score Point 5

This response exhibits a generally strong command of expository writing. It is well organized and progresses logically from beginning to end. The even development of key ideas helps to unify the response, and the detailed description of the Museum and its three best areas (children's laboratory, dinosaur exhibit, gift shop) adds to a sense of completeness.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of exposition

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

Prorodeo Hall of Champions

The place I would like to go most, is the Prorodeo Hall of Champions, in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This particular Hall of Fame honors the cowboys that have excelled in Prorodeo events. For a cowboy, there is no greater honor than to be inshrined into the Prorodeo Hall of Champions.

Rodeo cowboys specialize in several different events, or just one. The different events in Prorodeo are; team roping, calf roping, steer wrestling, bull riding, saddle bronc riding, and bareback riding.

There are thousands of things to be seen at the Prorodeo Hall of Champions. First, there are theatres one, and two. Using six panoramic screens, twenty-four slide projectors, three motion picture projectors and stereophonic sound, the theater presentations provide a fascinating insight into rodeo history and an exciting encounter with the present day sport.

Next, there is the Hall of Champions. The rewards, dedication, perseverence, and long, lonely travel on the rodeo circuit are shown by the displays of memerobilia of Don Gay, Larry Mahan, Jim Shoulders, and many other rodeo honoree's.

After the Hall of Champions, comes the Heritage Hall. The working tools of the ranch and rodeo cowboy are displayed showing changes in boots, saddles, ropes, and other gear from the early 1800's.

The Garden is a mini-rodeo arena, and live rodeo animals are in this attractive, outdoor exhibition. During the summer months, a rodeo clown is available to talk with visitors about rodeo and to demonstrate many of the required rodeo skills.

It would be a great place for anyone, not just cowboys and cowgirls, to visit. I think that almost everyone, young and old, would be fascinated with all the interesting things inside this wonderful Hall of Champions!

Score Point 6

The wealth of specific detail used to elaborate key ideas (theaters, Hall of Champions, Heritage Hall and garden of the Prorodeo Hall of Fame) results in a complete, vivid response. Unity is achieved through a strong logical progression of ideas culminating in a conclusion that ties the piece together (everyone would be fascinated with all the interesting things). Syntactic and verbal sophistication constitute a compositional risk resulting in a highly effective response that indicates a strong command of expository writing.

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 6 - DESCRIPTIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - DESCRIPTIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	LIMITED COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	May display severe errors in mechanics. NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is the prompt 6th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Think about your favorite season of the year. It can be winter, summer, spring, or fall. Describe the season so that someone reading your paper will know what you like about that season. You might want to include what the weather is like during this season, how the outdoors looks, how it smells, the sounds you hear, and how you feel during the season.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.
- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.
- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.
- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

Summer

It's cool when dark rain clouds are over you. You get scared when you hear the feirce thunder. I'm always sad when ugly fall comes.

Score Point 1

This response gives a subject (summer) and provides some appropriate detail (dark rain clouds, fierce thunder). However, it is too brief to demonstrate more than a minimal attempt at descriptive writing.

SUMMER

I Like summer the best out of all the season's.

I like it the best because I can go to the park, or walk to the mall. I can go to the park and play baseball and football.

I can walk to the card shop and buy baseball or basketball cards.

I also go to Tony's and Daniel's house. We play Sega Genisis or Nintendo. I play Nintendo at my house too.

When it rains. I go in our backyard and play in it.

I can also go to work with my step-dad. Most of the time he pays me ten dollers for mopping and sweeping the floor. But sometimes he will pay me $20.

Score Point 1

Although this writer selects a favorite season (summer), the activities listed are not clearly related to summer nor is it sufficiently clear that the writer especially enjoys these activities. More of an attempt to describe summer so that the reader understands why it is the best season might have resulted in a higher score.

my favorite season Summer!!!!

Summer to most people is real fun but to me its the greatest dream of all and I don't want to Wake up. ¶When I do wake up it's like going into Winter (cold). although when the dream is going on I Love every minute of it. I go all over the world and I get to see the most beautiful things. for instance. I get to see people, people I Love and care about, I see the beautiful trees and lakes of Minnesota, and the ocean of California, but the most luxurious thing I see out of all these great things and places is still Summer. Summer, what a great word it sounds so happy. The most wonderful smells come out in the summer. It's so very hard to explain it's like Working on the worlds most diffiault project and when you finish your so elatede. Thats the best dream to me (Summer).

Score Point 1

It is clear that summer is this writer's favorite season and though an attempt is made to describe the emotions evoked by summer, the attempt is not successful. Only one short list in the middle (trees and lakes of Minnesota, ocean of California) is specific. The rest of the details are vague and general (most beautiful things, most wonderful smells).

2 = The response indicates a limited command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.
- may display numerous errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

Summer

My Favorite season is Summer because you can go swimming, have water balloon fights and even Shaving cream fights, and go on Summer Vacations.

I enjoy the weather because it is hot and you can where shorts. The weather outside is hot and very colorful. I care for the colors of summer

I appreciate colors of summer. I enjoy the red strawberrys the green grass. Orange flowers. And another thing that I like is when is when I bite into a red strawberry I enjoy the sounds of the birds. and I like the way the flowers smell

I Pefer all the other seasons but summer is my favorite as you can see.

Score Point 2

This is a highlight response, containing a mixture of general (hot weather, the way flowers smell) and specific details (water balloon fights, wear shorts) which are presented as lists with little, if any, elaboration. An attempt at organization is exhibited.

Spring

Spring is my favrite time of the year. I like Spring because I can go and do things. I also like Spring because me and my friends get out of school. There are, also, very pretty days in Spring.

There are alot of things in Spring. There are pretty clear blue sky's. There are birds flying, and chirping. People also have a good time. Some like to go camping in Spring. Other people like to do other stuff like fishing, sports, or even bike ride.

Spring is when people, and animals do things. Some people usualley visit friends. Birds usualley chirp and fly. People like to go places also. In Spring I usually go to the mall with my friends.

People do alot of different things, but there are things in Spring people have to watch out for. The hot sun can burn you or insects may try to bite you. To avoid those two things buy some sun screen and some incect repelent.

Now you now how much I like Spring. There are a lot of things to do. People get out and do things also. I hope you like Spring as much as I do.

Score Point 2

This writer presents enough specific detail focused on spring to earn a "2" in the first two paragraphs. Halfway through the response, however, ideas are repeated (birds chirp and fly) and become general (people go out and do things). In addition, the fourth paragraph represents a drift from the primary focus (things to watch out for).

Spring

Spring is my favorite season of the year. It's playfulness. I can dance, play, and even go on adventures.

In spring I like to smell the brisk flowers and roll around in the bright, delicate green grass.

After all my fun I sit under a big, tall, round, tree and listen to the pleasant sound of the trees blowing in the spring breeze and the tender sound of the birds singing.

Most of the time in spring I feel gloomy. But then I feel cheerful. When I feel gloomy I go outside and get all my feelings out and try to be happy. It works.

Why I like spring is that the weather is never to hot or to cold It just ideal. I like when the weather is ideal you can do more things.

Now you know what my favorite season of the year is.

Score Point 2

While some of the details presented in this response are specific (roll around in the bright, delicate green grass; tender sounds of birds singing), the rest are general (play, go on adventures, do more things). There is an attempt at organization, but the lack of specific elaboration indicates only a limited command of descriptive writing.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

"Summer"

As I walk on a cool summer day. I feel the hot summer breeze blowing in my face, as would a red hot burning fire.

As I continue walking I see the flowers blowing in the breeze, and the tall grass swaying, back and forth, back and forth.

At last I stop and hear all the varjous things such-as, the birds chriping, and the hot breeze blowing in my hair.

I smell the wonderful things such-as the wild flowers, and the cool, fresh, and crisp air.

The reason I like summer is because you can do alot of activitys during the summer suchas, swimming, volleyball, tennis and other sports. The summer is so beautiful think of all the wonderful things you can feel, smell, hear, and see in the summer.

Score Point 3

This response has several clear, specific details with some elaboration (red hot burning fire, tall grass swaying back and forth). Although the elaboration is listlike, it is sustained and specific enough to move beyond highlights. Effective transitions (As I continue walking, At last I stop) indicate organization and control.

GRADE 6 DESCRIPTIVE WRITING SCORE POINT 3

The season I like most is..... Winter. I prefer Winter becauce I like to go innertubing and Constructing Snowmen. I just think its so cool to go and roll around in the Snow and making snowangels.

There is not really a essence to winter but I like to go inside and sit by the fireplace with a hot cup of cider and Smell the fireplace burning the pine wood.

The climate is cold and icy. It gets annoying. But it's fun to slip and slide and fall. I love to hear the birds that are flocking south for the winter.

And then, After the Cold day, I go insise And have a bowl of hot soup with a cup of milk. Then I go and stoke the fire. for the cold night.

What a Winter Fantasy!

Score Point 3

This response has several clear, specific details (innertubing, snowangels, bowl of hot soup) with a little elaboration. It is organized and controlled. Precise word choice (fire place burning the pine wood, stoke the fire for a cold night) helps move the response beyond highlights.

Summer

The season I'm describing is summer. I cherish summer because of the beautiful sounds
I hear and the weather. I love summer because I can get out of bed knowing that the sun is high and the sky is clear, clear as the ocean blue.

Summer's weather is hot and warm. The weather of summer is exquisitely lovely. The sky is so clear it feels like paradise. The weather is what makes up summer, with out the weather summer would not exist.

As for the sounds of summer, I hear the birds chirping all through the morning much like a little bell calling for it's voice. I also like the sounds of pools splashing, like a whale swimming briefly through the ocean.

The smell of summer is so extraodnary I could hardly contain my self from wanting to go out doors. I adore the sweet smell of the green grass, bright flowers and the tall green trees. I also like the smell of my mom cooking on our grill while I'm laying on the green grass with a tall cool glass of lemonaide. Summer makes me feel like so happy and joyfull It seems like nothing could get me down.

Now as you can see summer is my favorite season of the year. with out summer the seasons would not be Complete.

Score Point 3

This organized response consists of clusters of ideas. While the elaboration in the last paragraph is strong, the elaboration on the first idea (weather) is very general and the attempt at simile in the third paragraph is not successful (a bell calling for its voice, a whale swimming briefly).

4 = The response indicates a command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

'Winter'

I think winter is beautiful because there are peacfull Sounds. I like to calm down in the winter just walking around outside. Winter is Special because of the lovely holiday Christmas.

I especlally Love the Outdoors. I enjoy Smells of hot Chocolate when it Snow's. I hear the winter owl that hoots at you! I also hear the Snow Crunching beneath my feet. Against my window I hear the branches biting it. The Sight's I See in winter are like Someone painted the grass White and the mountains and trees white. I feel the Snow queen blow her winter winds at me that feels like Soft kiss against my Cheek.

The weather is bitter cold. People have to dress Warm for the icy cold weather.

In the winter time I Love to go Sleding in the white Snow. And during this Season id like to learn to ice Skate.

That is why I Love the beautiful Lovely Snow queen's prize possession winter.

Score Point 4

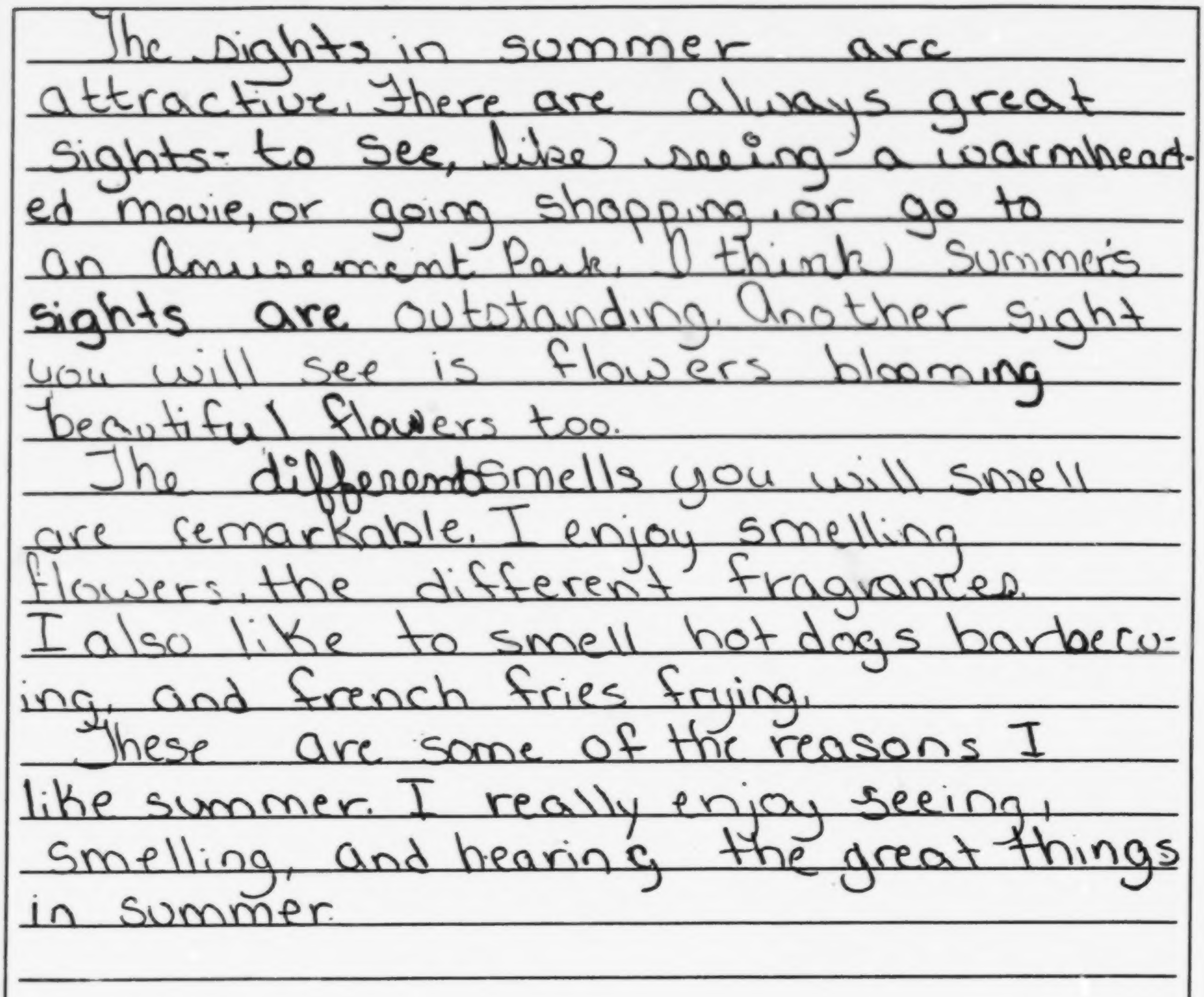
This response exhibits a command of descriptive writing. There is an overall progression of ideas and elaboration is specific throughout. Vivid images (someone painted the grass white, feel the snow queen blow her winter winds, snow queen's prize possession) strengthen this somewhat brief response.

Summer

Summer is the season I'm going to describe. I like summer because I care for Seeing flowers bloom Summer makes me fill warm in side. I also like to see rain fall. Theres always fun activities to do, such as going swimming, playing ball, or going hiking. You could also have fun in the great outdoors, some sights you might see in the great outdoors are birds singing, and children playing.

Summer's weather is fantastic. It is usually hot, and sunny, or cloudy, and cold. When rainfalls it's like tears running down a cheek. The yellow rose is the bright summer's sun. I think summers weather is really wonderful. When the rain falls a light aroma is left behind. I really savor the fresh rain falling and the exellent essence.

The sounds in summer are incredible. My beloved sound is the fresh sound of trees blowing in the summer's breeze. Another sound in summer is water waves delicatily moving in the ocean. I love the exceptional sound of childrens laughter in the air.



The sights in summer are attractive. There are always great sights- to see, like seeing a warmhearted movie, or going shopping, or go to an Amusement Park. I think Summer's sights are outstanding. Another sight you will see is flowers blooming beautiful flowers too.

The different smells you will smell are remarkable. I enjoy smelling flowers, the different fragrances. I also like to smell hot dogs barbecuing, and french fries frying.

These are some of the reasons I like summer. I really enjoy seeing, smelling, and hearing the great things in summer.

Score Point 4

This response consists of loosely connected clusters of ideas. Bare, unelaborated details are interspersed with elaborated ideas. Some details are elaborated with lists of specifics (activities, sights, sounds, smells) and the elaboration on weather contains vivid imagery through simile. Precise word choice further strengthens the response (aroma, savor, beloved, waves delicately moving). More even development is needed for a higher score.

My favorite season

The favorite season I am going to describe is winter.

There are several outdoor activities to participate in during the winter. My dad and I just love to go skiing every weekend. It is also very amusing when you go thrusting down a thrilling steep hill! My cousin and I just adore playing in the soft smooth snow. It feels like millions of feathers when snowflakes come dancing down from the sky.

In winter, when it snows, the snow falls ever so peacefully. When there's a layer of snow I always have a feeling come over me that angels are guarding me.

Outside, in the winter, it often looks like an enormous white piece of construction paper. When it's snowing, the snowflakes look like sparkling glitter.

In the winter, when the wind blows, it sounds like a beautiful whistle. I can hear the fire crackling all through the cold night. Coming in from the outside, I can hear the persistant, monotonous sound of our kettle whistle.

Inside, my house smells like hot chocolate with marshmallows. It often smells of cookies, pies, and all sorts of pastries at my grandma's house.

How I feel in the winter often depends on the weather. Sometimes I truly feel sick. Alot of times, in the winter, I feel like just going to sleep and staying that way until spring!

Although I like all of the seasons, winter is that special season for me.

Score Point 4

This response is specific throughout and the writer makes effective use of simile (feels like millions of feathers, looks like an enormous piece of white construction paper, sounds like a beautiful whistle). However, the logical progression of ideas is not strong. Smoother transitions within paragraphs and between clusters of ideas would contribute to a higher score.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

My Favorite Season

During the beautiful summer, I hear so many wonderful sounds. I hear birds singing the sweetest songs. I also hear the trees swaying with the rustling wind. Sometimes I hear chimes or even buzzing insects. I hear roaring thunder with the soft, refreshing rain.

I smell cool rain that just has fallen. It smells humid, but yet so natural.

I touch cool sprouts of grass, and sharp, pointed pine cones.

I look at beautiful flowers blooming so elegantly, and lovely trees swaying so smooth with the wind. I watch birds so gracefully flying in the enormous, blue sky, and fish splashing water everywhere. I also see people playing so pleasantly in the parks.

My feelings in this radiant season, often tend to change. One minute I may be feeling so magnificent, like the sun is shining so bright and you are having such a glorious time swimming in an outdoor pool, and the next minute so gloomy, like the thunder is roaring and the rain is coming down so hard and you are just so bored. I also feel gloomy because summer goes by so fast! Most of the time I feel marvelous. I feel special because I live in a world with so many exciting seasons.

I eat so many terrific foods and treats during the summer. Some of them are delicious watermelon, ice cream, candy, popcorn, popsicles, and refreshing tea. They are great to have during the hot, humid summer.

The weather in my season is so enjoyable, whether it is raining, torrid, cool, or if there are even so little of clouds in the sky. I like my season, and the thing I see, hear, feel, touch, and what the weather is like in it. It is so wonderously beautiful!

Score Point 5

This response is organized around the senses and the ideas progress logically throughout. The writer takes some compositional risk through the use of vivid imagery (rustling wind, roaring thunder, cool sprouts of grass, torrid weather). A generally strong command of descriptive writing is evident.

My favorite season is summer. There are many exciting activities in summer. The weather seems to sneak up on you. There are a large variety of natural wonders. I can't wait to tell you all about it, come on.

There are many exciting activities in summer. The bang of the soccerball as it is booted out of orbit. excites the audience. Splash! goes the water as the Olympic swimmers stroke for the gold. On the Fourth of July the fireworks go Boom! Bang! Pop! Pow! The fun never seems to end.

The weather in the summer is very furtive. The weather on ferociously hot days boils thermometers. Sudden thunder storms seem to shoot out lightning bolts and throw hail stones at you. The rain pours down as if buckets of water were being poured from the clouds then suddenly it all stops as if it was never there. Weather is very mysterious in summer.

There are many natural wonders in summer. The sky is filled with a rainbow of birds singing in the breeze. The meadows feel like soft swan feathers tickling your feet. The clouds in the bright blue sky are like huge, white fluffy cotton balls sitting in the sky. The greatest thing in summer is nature.

Summer is the best season of the year. Its weather is very mysterious. All of the fun activities never seem to end. The natural wonders are beautiful. I love summer. I wish it wouldn't ever leave.

Score Point 5

The key ideas in this organized response are elaborated with appropriate and varied details. The writer takes a compositional risk in creating vivid images (the bang of the soccer ball as it is booted out of orbit, soft swan feathers tickling your feet), but more development is needed for a higher score.

Spring

Spring is an exquisite time of year. I think it is the most wonderful time of year to play tennis, basketball, and volleyball. When it is especially warm outside I like to run for miles in a luscious pasture of grass. When the sun gleams down in our yard I love to lie in the grass and let the leaves take me away.

When you are in the beauteous outdoors it is best to wear short sleeves, shorts, and sandals. I like wearing all of them because those kinds of clothing lets my skin breathe and lets it feel free.

The weather in the Spring is warm as an oven with homemade hot chocolate chip cookies

The birds and butterflies patter their wings in the midst of high noon. During the day the flies buzz in your ear and irritate you. The bumble bees buzz around and enjoy the sweet pollen of a sunflower. at my grandma's house, I walk through her garden with beams of sunlight on my body. I see tulips, roses, petunas, and other lovely, welcoming flowers. At night hours crickets seem to be singing you a lullaby.

When you wake up and the wind is blowing you can see the trees swaying like a chorus swaying to the rythm of a hymn.

This exquisite time of year looks like a wonderland with nothing but fresh smelling flowers. In this wonderland I can see children playing. When the kids are tired you can see that they want to fall in a bed of flowers and let the flowers take them away

Early in the morning the wind blows and makes the flowers look as if they're waving happily to you. Usually right next to the flower beds there is a luscious pasture of green grass.

In this particular season it is quiet except for the birds chirping to cheer you up whenever you're feeling blue. For some odd reason birds can always tell whenever you are not the best of days. When they can tell, they sing you a hymn. The children also hear the birds, when they are playing.

There are some very sweet smells this time of year. I can smell fresh flowers as if someone just sprayed potpourri. The best you can smell is the fresh, clean, renewed essence in the air.

I can not see why anyone can't enjoy the Spring time. I wouldn't know what to do if I missed the Spring. So I hope and pray I would never have to.

Score Point 5

The key ideas in this response are developed with appropriate and varied details (sweet pollen of a sunflower, crickets singing you a lullaby, someone just sprayed potpourri). More even elaboration and smoother transitions between ideas are necessary for a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

Autumn

I slipped on a light jacket and walked out into the Cool autumn air. The trees around me were aglow with orange, red, and yellow. This is my favorite time of year to take long walks in the sunshine.

I slowly wandered down the road to the leaf-covered path known as the Autumn Trail. I wandered down the trail and through the leaves around me. A yellow maple leaf fluttered quietly to the ground.

The world smelled of wet earth and aged leaves.

I came to a stop, listening for a sign of the golden-brown fawn I sometimes saw while walking on this path. It suddenly leaped across the path and disappeared into the brilliant forest of colors.

I pretended I was the fawn and I leaped into a pile of leaves letting them settle peacefully around me.

At that moment I felt like I was in a world of my own. A world of peace. A world of silence. It was as though no one and nothing existed except the forest and me.

The wind rustled the leaves on the trees. A sparrow began to sing a melodious tune. A flock of birds flew overhead migrating south for the winter that was almost here.

I stood up and walked slowly down the trail - the Autumn Trail - dreaming of Autumn my favorite season.

Score Point 6

This response shows a strong command of descriptive writing. In addition to vivid imagery and rich, varied detail, the writer takes a successful compositional risk through effective use of the narrative mode. The reader is taken to and down the Autumn Trail and the experience is fully described, resulting in a well-developed, complete composition.

Summer

Summer is a relaxing season, where a person can forget their troubles and ly on an open field of grass with trees and flower pitches scattered all around. The breeze sweeps the sweet smell of the flowers into the air and is carried around. The flowers have many beautiful colors, bright red, purple violets summering yellows, bright green... Flowers, like this, grow in patches in vast fields of grass everywhere a person turns.

These vast fields of grass are greener than a four leaved clover. When lyed on the grass becomes a soft cusion for people to roll on.

Trees grow on these fields of grass mainly Ponderosa Pines and Evergreen trees grow grow on the fields. The Ponderosa trees grow to be taller than most buildings and the Evergreens grow to be the fullest. During the night when the wind blows it whistles and whirls through the trees and the trees start to sway back and forth from the might of the wind. About every three weeks it rains and during the night it frosts over the plants and buildings. In the morning everything glitters in the morning sunshine at dawn. The sunrise which the sun makes is filled with radiant purples, soft reds, bright yellows, and mixed violets. Everything looks like it is crystal coated as it gleams in the morning sun. Later in the morning the frost begins to melt and everything smells fresh. The ground is wet from the rain dripping off of things By noon all of the rain has evaporated and is at the hottest part of the day. It stays this temperature for about two hours, then it starts to cool down. The ground is dry by the end of the hot two hours and things are back to as if there was no rain In the evening some stay come out and the sun goes down. When the sun goes down it makes a sunset with soft pinks and purples which glide across the crest of the clouds as the sun decends behind the vast mountains. The moon comes out along with the sparkling stars and another moonlet night has come. This is such a wonderful sight for a person to see and forget their troubles in relaxation as they watch natures beauty.

Score Point 6

This response is well-developed through the consistent use of precise word choice and specific detail. By organizing the first half of the response around fields of grass and by taking the reader from morning to night in the second half, the writer takes a compositional risk that results in a complete response that is unified and progresses logically.

My Favorite Season

My favorite season is easy to detect if I can make you feel a chill just by reading this essay. If I can make you see the white plains of nothing and freezing soft snow on the rims of the window sills. You will know this season is here. If I can make you smell the smoke created by the heart-warming heat of the fire that will tell you to bundle up. If I can make you hear the wind howling through the bare and dull trees. I will have done my job by giving you a fright. You will be bundled up before you turn each page. Of course, the season is winter.

What I see during the winter is the white, cold snow slowly making its way to the freezing ground. Also the plain, dry, bare trees I see mounted with snow, like chocholate that tops ice cream. Another thing is the not only white, but deep snow on the empty fields of dead crops. I walk through seeing my breath It looks like. I'm blowing smoke like a dragon does fire. Winter sends a signal through my eyes that I am to get on my snowboots, mittens, and warm clothes. I see many spectacular sights during the year, but winter is the most beautiful of all.

The sounds of winter are most frightening. The howling wind sweeps across the plains and sounds as if ghosts are after me. The falling and rustling of the leaves sound like a great storm. The running of feet that search for shelter out of the cold, brings a thought that a wild animal is after them. I don't know why, but I enjoy being terrified at the listenings of my ear in the winter. I hope these terrifying sounds continue to give me a fright.

My emotions are mixed throughout my body. In one part I feel cold, and in another I feel warm. It isn't only the temperature, but happiness and excitiment that I feel. I am happy because there are holidays like Chirstmas and New Year's Day. I love the snow, but then I am hurt and worried because of accidents and slick roads. I have many feelings in winter, but happiness is the best.

Now you know how much I love winter. I hope it continues to be longer and longer every year. I also hope it will be colder and snow more. Maybe the old saying, "A dream that you wish will come true," really is true. If it is, I will dream of many more winters to come.

Score Point 6

This well-developed, complete response demonstrates a strong command of descriptive writing. Vivid imagery is employed throughout (blowing smoke like a dragon does fire, the running of feet that search for shelter), and the opening demonstrates further compositional risk. Ideas progress logically, and the ending serves to effectively tie the piece together.

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE
GRADE 6

ANALYTICS

ANALYTIC SCORING GUIDELINES

SENTENCE FORMATION

3. All sentences are complete and often varied in length and structure. The paper reads smoothly from sentence to sentence. There are few run-ons or fragments.

2. There is basically good sentence structure with occasional awkward or confusing constructions. There may be several run-ons or fragments.

1. There are many problems with sentence structure. Simple sentence patterns are used. Sentences are short, somewhat childlike and repetitious. Run-ons and fragments are common.

MECHANICS

3. Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level. There are few or no spelling errors in words appropriate to grade level.

2. Use of punctuation and capitalization is adequate but will contain certain errors. Several spelling mistakes may be present, or the same mistake may be repeated.

1. Capitalization is erratic and basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard. There are too many errors in mechanics which interfere with communication.

WORD USAGE

3. Vocabulary is carefully and imaginatively used. There are few or no problems with subject-verb agreement, correct forms of verbs, selection of pronouns, possessives, etc.

2. Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness. Some difficulties with agreement, verbs, pronouns, possessives, etc., may be manifest.

1. Vocabulary is quite limited; the essay evidences too many errors in agreement, verb forms, pronoun choice, possessives, etc., which interfere with communication.

DEVELOPMENT

3. Response is clearly elaborated, well organized, detailed enough to enhance clarity, follows from a main idea to a logical conclusion.

2. Details are clear and specific, but they may be unevenly elaborated or poorly organized.

1. Few details are included in a very brief response. If present, details are vague and sketchy.

Think about your favorite season of the year. It can be winter, summer, spring, or fall. Describe the season so that someone reading your paper will know what you like about that season. You might want to include what the weather is like during this season, how the outdoors looks, how it smells, the sounds you hear, and how you feel during the season.

Summer

Have you ever been out side
on a hot summer day?
I have, it is fun, especially
when you can play football, baseball,
basketball, and kickball. But the only
thing I don't like about summer
is that it smells, and it is so
hot. But the things I like about
sumer is no school, and I wake up
when ever I want, and go to
the mall when ever I want.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 1
Simple sentence patterns are used and sentences are somewhat childlike and repetitive.
MECHANICS: 2
Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are adequate, but there are several errors.
WORD USAGE: 1
Vocabulary is limited and repetitious. Very few specific words appear in this response.
DEVELOPMENT: 1
Due to repetition of ideas, this response does not move beyond a "1" in development.

Winter

Winter is my favorite season it is amazing When the snow falls it is so elegant. You can see deer and there are beautiful. The Bears are now hibernating peacfulley. The birds are flying south for the winter. The parents are buying there children winter clothes. Children are getting sick. Doctors are so busy at this time of the year. Alot of pepole are going skiing and tubing.

Skiing is fun. It is beoutiful on the mountain I can ski on the blue slopes. Me and my dad go skiing just about every saturday. Skiing is very hard when you are a beginer. You can rest at the ski loson and they have the best tasting hamburger's and frinchfries. at four a clock it is time to go home.

Skiing is my favorite favorite hobby in winter. It is fun so that is why it is My favorite season of the Year.!

SENTENCE FORMATION: 1

Simple sentence patterns are used and run-ons are common.

MECHANICS: 1

Use of punctuation and capitalization are adequate, but there are too many errors in spelling which interfere with communication.

WORD USAGE: 2

Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness, though there is some difficulty with pronoun choice (Me and my dad).

DEVELOPMENT: 2

Details are clear but not elaborated.

The summer is my favorite season. I like it because there's so much to do like join clubs, or camps, or even go camping. When we go camping I alway take time to smell the fresh summer air. The other thing I like to do is spend time with all my of my friends, and especially the one who's moving to chama.

I love planting plants and vegetables on the nice warm Saturdays, and Sundays. The Sound is probably the best thing I like about the summers because it's quiet, and the sound of rain dripping from the sky makes me feal really safe. Taste is a scence that tells me what I like thats cool and refreshing like ice cream, water melon, fruit, vegetables, Ice tea, and all Kinds of juices.

I love the way the Saturday morning sun hit's me when I'm playing basketball. But the one thing about summer I hate is when it ends.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 2
There is basically good sentence structure in this response; however, the repetition of sentence patterns keeps this a "2" in sentence formation.

MECHANICS: 2
There are several problems with punctuation, along with errors in basic spelling, which keep this paper a "2" in mechanics.

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but is repetitive in places.

DEVELOPMENT: 2
This response needs more elaboration for a higher score point.

"Winter"

In winter I feel as cold as a freezer with white, frozen ice all over my shivering body. Also in winter, I feel the wet, cold, icy snow all over my back, and hands, as I make immense, white, attractive snow angels and immense, white snowmen. Sometimes I feel bored because sometimes there is nothing to do in winter!

I see people laughing as they all sit around the enormous, sparkling Christmas tree. Under the Christmas tree I see huge, diminutive, beautiful presents. As all the kids stare at all of the colorfull presents and looking to see which presents are theirs! As you see joy filling their empty little harts, as their presents are bring past out one colorfull present after another. As everyone is opening their presents joy fills the fresh, clean, crisp air. As if a magical dust flies through the air putting happy, cheerful smiles on their beautiful faces.

I hear the sound of people laughing, as they rip open their enormous, beautiful, and colorful presents. I also her "Thank You!" millions and millions of times!

As my mom is cooking a immense

Christmas dinner for the whole family.
I smell Turkey cooking in the red, hot,
burning oven. I smell pumkin, apple, and
cherry pies cooking in the oven also.
I taste the big, hot, plumpy
turkey that has just been removed
from the oven. I taste the big, round
delicious pies as they burst into my
mouth!

I like "Winter" because my
birthday is in that wounderful month
of December.

The outdoors are covered with
white, beautiful snow that had fallen
the night befor.

So as you can see "Winter" is
my favorite Season of the year!

SENTENCE FORMATION: 3
Sentences are varied in length, and the paper reads smoothly from sentence to sentence though there are three fragments.

MECHANICS: 2
Punctuation and capitalization are adequate, but there are several errors in spelling.

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness, though there is some difficulty with wordiness.

DEVELOPMENT: 2
This response needs more elaboration for a higher score.

My favorite Season is fall. Fall is very Special to me. I admire it because of it's attractivness.

When you walk outside, the ground is Veiled with leaves, Creating a magical world of maroon, gold, and a deep shade of brown. The trees are damp and bare. The breeze blows through the leaves, causing them to dance around your feet.

When you are inside, a sound you would hear is the pitter-pattering of the rain pounding against the roof.

You Can smell the sweet aroma of wood burning and the smoke from a fireplace.

I also like this season because along with it comes.... Thanksgiving, a time when families get together.

I hope you can see Why I like fall!

SENTENCE FORMATION: 2
This response has basically good sentence structure though some sentences are short and simplistic.

MECHANICS: 3
Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level.

WORD USAGE: 3
Vocabulary is varied, specific, and imaginatively used (the ground is veiled with leaves, rain pounding against the roof).

DEVELOPMENT: 2
This response needs more elaboration for a higher score.

My Favorite Season

During the beautiful summer, I hear so many wonderful sounds. I hear birds singing the sweetest songs. I also hear the trees swaying with the rustling wind. Sometimes I hear chimes or even buzzing insects. I hear roaring thunder with the soft, refreshing rain.

I smell cool rain that just has fallen. It smells humid, but yet so natural.

I touch cool sprouts of grass, and sharp, pointed pine cones.

I look at beautiful flowers blooming so elegantly, and lovely trees swaying so smooth with the wind. I watch birds so gracefully flying in the enormous, blue sky, and fish splashing water everywhere. I also see people playing so pleasantly in the parks.

My feelings in this radiant season, often tend to change. One minute I may be feeling so magnificent, like the sun is shining so bright and you are having such a glorious time swimming in an outdoor pool, and the next minute so gloomy, like the thunder is roaring and the rain is coming down so hard and you are just so bored. I also feel gloomy because summer goes by so fast! Most of the time I feel marvelous. I feel special because I live in a world with so many exciting seasons.

I eat so many terrific foods and treats during the summer. Some of them are delicious watermelon, ice cream, candy, popcorn, popsicles, and refreshing tea. They are great to have during the hot, humid summer.

The weather in my season is so enjoyable, whether it is raining, torrid, cool, or if there are even so little of clouds in the sky. I like my season, and the thing I see, hear, feel, touch, and what the weather is like in it. It is so wonderously beautiful!

SENTENCE FORMATION: 3
Sentences are complete and varied in length and structure. The response reads fluently from sentence to sentence.

MECHANICS: 3
Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level.

WORD USAGE: 3
Vocabulary is varied, specific, and imaginatively used (trees swaying with the rustling wind, I touch cool sprouts of grass).

DEVELOPMENT: 3
This response is organized, elaborated, and detailed to the "3" level. The main idea follows logically from beginning to end.

NOTES

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